

Application No.: 10/659816  
Amendment dated: March 15, 2005  
Reply to Office action of December 15, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph at page 1, lines 2-4 with the following heading and paragraph:

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims priority from U.S. provisional application Ser. No. 60/410,374, filed Sep. 13, 2003, ~~and~~ which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

Please replace the paragraph at page 3, lines 14-24 with the following paragraph:

Referring to FIG. 1, the numeral 10 generally designates a checkout system, for example, a checkout system that is suitable for use in a grocery store or other retail store. Checkout system 10 includes a front module 10a with a conveyor, onto which a customer deposits or places ~~their~~ items to be purchased and where the cash register is typically located, and a rear module 10b to which the items are delivered for packing in a bag by a clerk or "bagger". The numeral 12 generally designates a bagging module of the present invention, which is especially suitable for positioning between the front and rear modules of a checkout system, such as checkout system 10. As will more fully described below, bagging module 12 is selectively positioned so that it can provide a substantially continuous feed of filled, or at least partially filled, bags to a customer ~~that~~ is standing adjacent the module. This may be particularly helpful when the store is short handed on baggers.

Application No.: 10/659816  
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Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, lines 20, with the following paragraph:

While several forms of the invention have been shown and described, other forms will now be apparent to those skilled in the art. For example, the movement of extendable support 22 or 122 may be powered or power assisted, for example, by a cylinder, ~~for example,~~ such as an air cylinder or a hydraulic cylinder, a motor, such as a servo motor, an inflatable bladder, or the like, ~~which is~~ controlled by a control system ~~that is~~ operable by the cashier, so that the extendable support may be moved between its operative and stowed position ~~mechanically, hydraulically, electrically, pneumatically by~~ mechanical, hydraulic, electrical, or pneumatic means, or by a combination thereof. In addition, the movement of extendible support may be spring assisted so that the effective weight of the central support member and bag support members is reduced. Furthermore, as previously noted, the position of the extendible support is preferably releasably fixed in at least its operative position, and may be fixed mechanically ~~or,~~ magnetically or frictionally, for example, by a conventional lever with a cam surface or a band that is moved in and out of frictional engagement with the central member 34, for example, by pivoting the lever. ~~IN~~ In addition, though illustrated as wire members, bag supports 36 and 136 may comprise plate members that extend partially down central support member 22 or 122 or may extend to table 20 or 120. ~~Alternately~~ Alternatively, a net or another sheet of material may extend between the respective proximal portions 38a of the Y-shaped arms 38 and table 20 or 120 to provide additional lateral support to the bags, especially plastic bags. Therefore, it

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will be understood that the embodiments shown in the drawings and described above are merely for illustrative purposes, and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention, which is defined by the claims that follow as interpreted under the principles of patent law including the doctrine of equivalents.